

**MINUTES
LANCASTER COUNTY BOARD OF CORRECTIONS
QUARTERLY MEETING
COUNTY-CITY BUILDING
ROOM 113
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2001
8:30 A.M.**

Commissioners Present: Bernie Heier, Chair
Ray Stevens, Vice Chair
Kathy Campbell
Larry Hudkins
Bob Workman

Others Present: Mike Thurber, Corrections Director
Dave Voorhis, Voorhis/Robertson Justice Services, Inc.
Kerry Eagan, Chief Administrative Officer
Gwen Thorpe, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Bruce Medcalf, County Clerk
Trish Owen, Deputy County Clerk
Ann Taylor, County Clerk's Office

Heier opened the Board of Corrections meeting at 8:17 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM

1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MAY 17, 2001 BOARD OF CORRECTIONS MEETING

MOTION: Campbell moved and Workman seconded approval of the minutes. Campbell, Workman and Heier voted aye. Stevens abstained from voting. Hudkins was absent from voting. Motion carried.

2 POPULATION STATISTICS

A. Population Comments

Mike Thurber, Corrections Director, reported an 8.3% increase in population averages from Fiscal Year 2000 to Fiscal Year 2001 (see agenda packet) and said both facilities are operating at 99% of capacity. He said bookings have also increased at a rate of 20-30 per month.

Campbell asked whether some of the inmates from the downtown facility could be moved to the Lancaster Correctional Facility (LCF) if there were more space.

Thurber said there would probably be an increase in disciplinary problems.

Campbell said the federal government is willing to contribute funds for construction of a jail. She asked whether those funds could be used to build an alternate facility if the County guaranteed a certain number of existing beds for federal prisoners in the main facility.

Thurber said federal prisoners need maximum security and said the County would be assuming liability for those prisoners. He added that the focus has been on alternatives to incarceration, rather than building more beds.

Thurber said Corrections has been working with the County Court to collect payment of fines from offenders, noting \$52,000 has been collected through the end of June 2001. This has also reduced the number of incarceration days for those offenders.

In response to a question from Campbell, Thurber said about half of these prisoners are City and half are County.

Campbell asked the Corrections Director and the Chair of the Board of Corrections to send a letter to Mayor Wesely and the City Council informing them of steps that have been taken the past year to address their concerns and indicating that more recommendations will be forthcoming as a result of the Corrections Needs Assessment.

B. Population Graphs

See agenda packet.

C. Fiscal Year Statistical Report

See agenda packet.

D. Jail Standards Inspection

Thurber said the Nebraska Jail Standards recently inspected both facilities and expressed concern that population increases have exceeded rated capacity.

3 OTHER ACTIVITIES

A. Community Service Program

Campbell suggested discussion of applications at a Management Team meeting.

Thurber distributed *Community Service Program, County Road Litter Pickup* (see agenda packet). He said the program was initiated in July, 2001 and said crews cleaned over 80 miles of county roads by the end of August.

Hudkins arrived at 8:35 a.m.

B. Good News Jail & Prison Ministries

Thurber reported that the Good News Jail & Prison Ministries will hold their 6th Annual Praise Celebration on October 1, 2001 at the Cornhusker Hotel. This event is a fund raiser for the Jail Chaplaincy Program.

4 NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROJECT UP-DATE

Thurber reported on the Nebraska contingency's visit to a pre-trial program in Pima County, Arizona and two county-operated programs in Maryland, a pre-trial program operated by the Prince George County Department of Corrections and a privately contracted, intensive Driving Under the Influence (DUI) in-house treatment program for Calvert County. He suggested that Lancaster County ask Judge Missouri, Administrative Judge of the Seventh Circuit Court of Maryland, to come to Lincoln and discuss pre-trial programs with the District Court and County Court Judges.

The Board concurred with the suggestion and asked Thurber to make the necessary arrangements.

Dave Voorhis, Voorhis/Robertson Justice Services, Inc., gave an overview of the Corrections Needs Assessment, noting the following recommendations:

- Provide alternatives to incarceration
- Offer in-house and out-patient substance abuse treatment
- Integrate the management information system
- Provide pre-trial services and classification
- Start an out-of-custody work program
- Enhance the in-custody work program
- Start a community service program
- Enhance the home detention program and place under the Department of Corrections
- Expand the jail intake area
- Relocate the Probation offices and utilize that space for other programs
- Eliminate parking underneath the Corrections facility and move booking and intake to that level
- Purchase a caller system to notify offenders of court dates

- O Provide the Corrections Director more flexibility in assigning "good time" and offer inmates the ability to earn additional "good time" by working in one of the work programs during the day and participating in treatment or educational programs at night
- O Hire a coordinator for the criminal justice committee and programming

Voorhis said the County will be faced with a \$15 million jail construction project if it cannot get a handle on the increasing jail population. He said a decision would also have to be made as to whether to expand the downtown facility or to build at Airpark.

In response to a question from Workman, Campbell said Kit Boesch, Human Services Administrator, has indicated that she does not have the expertise to coordinate efforts at the adult level. She asked Voorhis whether the Adult Corrections Coordinator should be placed under the auspices of the County Board or the Department of Corrections.

Voorhis said he believes it would be a mistake to place the position under the courts. He said it may be beneficial to create the position at the director level and to conduct a national candidate search.

Campbell said she favors placing the position under the County Board, at least initially.

MOTION: Hudkins moved and Workman seconded to direct the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board of Corrections to convene the Justice Council to discuss the concept of an Adult Corrections Coordinator. Hudkins, Workman, Campbell, Stevens and Heier voted aye. Motion carried.

5 ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Stevens moved and Workman seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 a.m. Stevens, Workman, Hudkins, Campbell and Heier voted aye. Motion carried.

Bruce Medcalf
County Clerk